

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently Amended) An implant for promoting intervertebral fusion, comprising:
a cage having two sidewalls, a posterior backwall;
the sidewalls and backwall defining an open bottom with an edge conforming to a flat plane;
the sidewalls and backwall further defining an open top conforming to a convex plane;
[[, and]] an anterior opening allowing the cage to be packed with bone graft and/or biologic materials *in situ* using an anterior approach; and
a physically separate, rigid gate element for closing the anterior opening after the cage is positioned in an intervertebral disc space and packed with bone graft and/or biologic materials.
2. (Original) The implant of claim 1, wherein the cage and gate are constructed of a radiolucent material.
3. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein the cage and gate are constructed of carbon fiber.
4. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein:
the cage is constructed of a radiolucent material; and
further including one or more radiopaque markers on the cage.
5. (Original) The implant of claim 1, wherein the backwall is indented to minimize neurocompression.
6. (Original) The implant of claim 1, wherein the backwall is expandable so that the sidewalls can be closer together for insertion and spread apart after implantation.
7. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein:
the sidewalls have a posterior height and an anterior height; and
wherein the posterior height is less than the anterior height, thereby forming a trapezoid.

8. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 7, wherein the trapezoid is differently shaped for different vertebral levels.

9. (Original) The implant of claim 1, further including one or more jigs for fixing the cage in position, including a jig for driving a screw through an upper vertebra into the cage or through the cage into a lower vertebra.

10. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein sidewalls have a convex upper edge.

11. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein:
the backwall has opposing lateral edges; and
wherein each sidewall is rigidly affixed to the backwall at the lateral edges.

12. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, further including:
an expandable backwall with opposing lateral edges; and
wherein each sidewall is rigidly affixed to the backwall at the lateral edges.

13. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, further including:
an expandable backwall; and
wherein the sidewalls are generally parallel to one another before and after the expansion of the backwall.

14. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein the cage has an open top and bottom.

15. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein:
the sidewalls terminate in anterior edges; and
wherein the gate element extends to each anterior edge.

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16. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein the sidewalls are generally to one another.